

Message Text

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SUBJECT: ASSISTANT SECRETARY RICHARDSON CALLS ON MINISTER OF
CULTURE DEMICHEV

DEPT FOR CU, EUR/SOV; USIA FOR IEE

REF: A) MOSCOW 7158; B) STATE 107289

1. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE JOHN RICHARDSON, JR. SPENT FRIDAY, MAY 23, IN MOSCOW FOLLOWING PARTICIPATION IN CEREMONIES OPENING METROPOLITAN MUSEUM EXHIBIT IN LENINGRAD. DURING COURSE OF DAY HE PAID FORMAL CALLS ON THE MINISTER OF CULTURE AND DEPUTY MINISTERS OF EDUCATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION. HE WAS GUEST OF HONOR AT LUNCHEON HOSTED BY AMBASSADOR AND ATTENDED INTER ALIA BY DEPUTY MINISTER OF CULTURE POPOV, DEPUTY MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION SOFINSKIY, MGU RECTOR KHOKLOV, AND MFA CULTDIV ACTING CHIEF V. V. KARYAGIN. IN EVENING HE ATTENDED CONCERT BY SVYATOSLAV RICHTER AT PUSHKIN GALLERY. CALLS ON EDUCATION DEPUTY MINISTERS REPORTED SEPTEL.

2. MINISTER OF CULTURE P. N. DEMICHEV RECEIVED AMBASSADOR, ASSISTANT SECRETARY AND P AND C COUNSELOR AT 10:00 A.M. AT HIS SIDE WERE POPOV, DYUZHEV, AND BUTROVA.

3. DURING PLEASANTRIES MINISTER MADE POINT OF
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URGING ASSISTANT SECRETARY TO SPEND LONGER IN

SOVIET UNION TO VISIT MORE INTERESTING PEOPLE AND PLACES. HE THEN REMARKED ON MINISTRY'S EFFORT TO PROVIDE VERY BEST LOCATION FOR THE TWENTY-ONE AMERICAN PAINTINGS INCLUDED IN THE METROPOLITAN EXHIBIT. DURING RESPONSE ASSISTANT SECRETARY COMPLIMENTED SOVIETS ON PRESENTATION OF METROPOLITAN PAINTINGS AND MENTIONED WARMLY HIS VISIT TO CEMETERY AND MEMORIAL TO DEFENDERS OF LENINGRAD, THEN REMARKED ON SUCCESS OF BOLSHOI BALLET'S U.S. VISIT. HE CONTINUED THAT AMERICANS WERE LOOKING FORWARD TO BOLSHOI OPERA AND QUERIED WHETHER WE MIGHT ALSO EXPECT TO SEE THE MINISTER HIMSELF, IN VIEW OF INVITATION CONVEYED TO HIM EARLIER IN LETTER FROM AMBASSADOR. IN RESPONSE LAST QUESTION DEMICHEV SAID, WITH EVIDENT ENTHUSIASM, THAT HE "WOULD BE HAPPY TO COME IF MY GOVERNMENT WILL PERMIT A NEW AND BUSY MINISTER TO LEAVE." IF PERMISSION FORTHCOMING HE SAID, VISIT WOULD BE AT END OF JUNE. IN SUBSEQUENT ENCOUNTER POPOV (WHO WAS IN ATTENDANCE ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY FULL TIME AND SAW HIM OFF AT AIRPORT) SAID THAT HE WOULD BE DOING SOME LOBBYING WITH OFFICIALS, PARTICULARLY KOSYGIN, IN FAVOR OF VISIT.

4. PROCEEDING TO OTHER POINTS, ASSISTANT SECRETARY EXPRESSED DEPARTMENT'S APPRECIATION FOR EXCELLENT ITINERARY WORKED OUT FOR NEW YORK JAZZ REPERTORY PAG, AND WENT ON TO EXPRESS HOPE THAT WE COULD COUNT ON MINISTRY'S SUPPORT TO ENSURE THAT GOSKONTSERT PROVIDED BEST POSSIBLE FOOD AND LODGING WHICH WAS SO IMPORTANT TO SUCCESS OF SUCH TOURS. IN ASIDE DEMICHEV ASKED COLLEAGUES WHETHER THERE WAS ANY "PROBLEM" IN THIS REGARD AND WAS QUICKLY ASSURED BY THEM THAT THERE WAS NONE. POINT, HOWEVER, WAS USEFULLY MADE.

5. DEMICHEV RESPONDED BY THANKING ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR GOOD HANDLING OF BOLSHOI BALLET IN U.S. AND ASSURED THAT MINISTRY WOULD DO ALL IT COULD FOR U.S. GROUPS VISITING HERE. "AS YOU KNOW," HE SAID, "THERE IS GREAT INTEREST HERE IN ALL ASPECTS OF AMERICAN CULTURE."

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6. ASSISTANT SECRETARY THEN EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR JUST-RECEIVED NOMINATION OF TWO SOVIET CANDIDATES UNDER YOUNG ARTISTS' EXCHANGE (REFTEL A), AND NOTED GENTLY THAT SOVIETS ALREADY HAVE OUR FIVE NOMINATIONS UNDER THIS PROGRAM. HE ALSO CITED SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE OF CLAUDIA GRAZIANO AT BOLSHOI SCHOOL THIS PAST YEAR.

7. MINISTER THEN GAVE BRIEF DISCOURSE ON THE CHANGED STATE OF US-USSR RELATIONS, STARTING WITH ARMAND HAMMER AND THE PENCIL FACTORY AND MOVING DOWN TO RECENT VISIT OF GOVERNOR HARRIMAN. HE MENTIONED WITH SOME EMPHASIS THAT DURING MEETING WITH HARRIMAN, IOSYGIN HAD RECALLED THEIR CONVERSATION OF FIVE YEARS BEFORE IN WHICH THEY HAD AGREED THAT IT MADE NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE WHETHER ONE OF THE SUPER POWERS COULD DESTROY THE OTHER NINETEEN TIMES OR TWENTY-ONE TIMES. THERE CAN BE NO RETURN TO COLD WAR, HE SAID, ADDING THAT AMBASSADOR COULD SURELY CONFIRM THIS FROM HIS EXPERIENCE. MINISTER THEN TURNED TO RICHARDSON AND SAID (WITH INCONGRUOUSLY BEATIFIC SMILE): "IN YOUR PREVIOUS ACTIVITIES YOU WERE FAMILIAR WITH INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, AND YOU WILL SURELY HAVE ANALYSED IN THE SAME WAY THIS CHANGE IN THE STATE OF OUR RELATIONS." HE THEN CITED VLADIVOSTOK, THE COMING BREZHNEV VISIT, AND CSCE AS FRESH FACTORS IN THE SITUATION, CLOSING WITH THE THOUGHT THAT CULTURAL RELATIONS LEAD THE WAY IN THE IMPROVEMENT OF OVERALL BILATERAL RELATIONS.

8. ASSISTANT SECRETARY RESPONDED THAT HE AGREED WITH MINISTER'S ANALYSIS THAT THE IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS MUST BE OUR PRIMARY GOAL, AND THAT "CULTURAL RELATIONS BROADEN AND DEEPEN OUR UNDERSTANDING OF EACH OTHER AND MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR OUR TWO COUNTRIES TO WORK TOGETHER IN THE MOST REALISTIC WAY." THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY REITERATED HIS HOPE THAT MINISTER WOULD SOON VISIT U.S. AND MENTIONED THAT WHILE HE WOULD UNFORTUNATELY HAVE TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BE OUT OF WASHINGTON SOME DAYS DURING SECOND HALF OF JUNE, AS SOON AS ACCEPTANCE WAS RECEIVED, EVERY PREPARATION WOULD BE MADE TO WELCOME MINISTER AND ENSURE HIM A REWARDING VISIT.

9. MINISTER SEEMED CALM, ROBUST AND GAVE IMPRESSION OF CONFIDENT EXECUTIVE, EVEN THOUGH AT TIMES HIS VOICE SANK JUST TO THE LEVEL OF AUDIBILITY. FORTY-FIVE MINUTE MEETING WAS CHARACTERIZED MORE BY GENERAL WARMTH AND FRIENDLINESS THAN BY ANY SUBSTANTIVE OVERTURES OR RESPONSES ON PART OF MINISTER. ENTHUSIASM OF MINISTER AND HIS COLLEAGUES FOR PROSPECTIVE U.S. VISIT UNMISTAKABLY GENUINE. DURING LENINGRAD CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR, POPOV CONFIRMED THAT DEMICHEV HAS BEEN RELIEVED OF HIS PREVIOUS RESPONSIBILITIES

AS PARTY SECRETARY FOR CULTURAL AFFAIRS, AND IN
RESPONSE TO QUERY SAID THIS AREA WAS NOW BEING
COVERED PRIMARILY BY SUSLOV.
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